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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/827,032	04/19/2004	Stewart E. Sloan		2744

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EXAMINER

BROWN, MICHAEL A

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3764

DATE MAILED: 05/16/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

# Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/827,032

Applicant(s)

SLOAN, STEWART E.

Examiner

Michael Brown

Art Unit

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

## Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

## Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on \_\_\_\_.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

## Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-13 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-13 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

## Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

## Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_.
  - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

## Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_.

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Specification***

The specification is objected to as failing to provide proper antecedent basis for the claimed subject matter. See 37 CFR 1.75(d)(1) and MPEP § 608.01(o). Correction of the following is required: There is no support in the specification for the ball being removably mounted or the hand-gripping portion being generally V-shaped.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1, 3-4, 6, 8 and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Haygood.

Haygood discloses in figures 1-9 a batting practice device that anticipates a massage device comprising an elongated handle (4, 12), that has a hand gripping portion (the opening in 4), a ball 24 that is resilient (col. 4, lines 31-34) and removably attached to the handle (via 26) and the hand-gripping portion is generally V-shaped (fig. 1).

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

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(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 2 and 5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Haygood in view of Mitchell.

Haygood discloses in figures 1-9 a batting practice device that anticipates a massage device, substantially as claimed. However, Haygood does not disclose the handle being flexible or made of plastic. Mitchell teaches in figures 1-8 a flexible handle 14 having a resilient ball 12 attached at one end (fig. 1). The handle is made of plastic (col. 4, lines 38-41). It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time that the invention was made that the handle disclosed by Haygood could be completely flexible as taught by Mitchell in order to allow the handle to wrap around the user's hand. The handle could be made of plastic because it is durable material that would allow the device to extend downward in order to use the ball as a massaging device on any portion of the human body.

Claims 7 and 9-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Haygood in view of Rodriguez.

Haygood discloses in figures 1-9 a batting practice device that anticipates a massaging device, substantially as claimed. However, Haygood does not disclose the ball being a tennis ball or a net extending around the ball. Rodriguez teaches in figures 1-2 a tennis volley practice device comprising a ball (col. 4, lines 40-42) inside of a net 10, wherein the net and the ball are attached to a handle 1. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time that the invention was made that the

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tennis ball as taught by Rodriguez could be substituted for the ball disclosed by Haygood because either ball could be used to massage portions of the human body. The net material as taught by Rodriguez could be used to assist in holding the ball onto the handle.

Claims 11-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Haygood in view of Mitchell, along with Killion.

Haygood discloses in figures 1-9 a batting practice device that anticipates a massage device, substantially as claimed. However, Haygood does not disclose the handle being flat, flexible and made of plastic. Mitchell teaches in figures 1-9 a flexible handle 16 made of plastic. Killion teaches in figure 1 a handle that is flat. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time that the invention was made that the handle disclosed by Haygood could be flexible and made of plastic as taught by Mitchell for the reason set forth above. The handle could be flat as taught by Killion because flatness is simply a different shape that doesn't provide any novelty over the prior art.

### ***Conclusion***

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Williamson discloses a handle attached to a ball.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Michael Brown whose telephone number is 571-272-4972. The examiner can normally be reached on 5:30 am-4:00 pm Monday-Thursday.

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Gergory Huson can be reached on 571-272-4887. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

M. Brown  
May 5, 2005

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael A. Brown", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

**MICHAEL A. BROWN**  
**PRIMARY EXAMINER**